
American Women Missionaries and Pioneers Collection



Part 1: Missionaries

The Irene Forsythe Hanson Papers, 1921-1980

Series II

Literary Manuscripts

Folder Description:

“A Gypsy for the Gospel”
(handwritten travelogue,
September 1930-February 1931)

Box Number:

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A Typy for the Gospel

A Travelogue of September 1930 - February 1931

'Back to the road again and again'

I have you a spirit of wanderlust? Fortunately I have for my life as one of incessant traveling about. Come, I'll take you over the road traveled from September 1930 to February 1931.

Isingtao went to Kiaochow. 'By ricksha, Train and ricksha 60 miles with Miss Lane and Miss Tan, stayed ten days is one item of my diary. The report of this place is a call to prayer for a group small, scattered and unhelphed as a result of dissension among its leaders. The Holy Spirit is mighty, reviving, cleansing power is the only remedy for the spiritual life of that place. Please pray!

X Kiaochow N.W. to Kang Chia Chuang. 'By ricksha, train wheelbarrow & walking thirty-three miles. Stayed eighteen days. Lived here in the yard of an old temple whose idols have been recently carried out and dumped in one of the many large ponds surrounding the village. The big empty building has been used since as a meeting place for Howard character classes for the illiterate and for a sort of farmers organization and the local Christians got permission for us to use it. In the daytime, as it was the busy time of fall harvest, I plodded on in the never-ending but always-interesting Chinese language study and did what I could for the endless stream of babies with diarrhea. After a supper at dark and the cessation of labor in the fields, crowds of non-Christians, at first mostly men but gradually more women, came to the temple. This is practically new territory so the victrola, a foreign woman, two educated Chinese girls with natural unbound feet who preached so interestingly and the singing of simple songs drew great numbers. Some were idly curious, others were deeply interested. I had the joy of studying the Bible with the few Christians and I marvelled to see how these new believers who had had so little regular instruction had been led by the Spirit, Himself, to a deep perception of spiritual truth.

Went to Tang Ling. 'By wheelbarrow pushed by one man and pulled by a man and a mule. Four miles. Stayed twelve days'. Lived in an empty school house in a temple courtyard. This village was formerly so anti-foreign that, when, in the early days, the magistrate went to announce that the emperor of China had given permission to Germany to build the present railroad to Tsinan, the villagers called him a 'foreign devil' and

2] beat him and his horse wounding them severely. When the construction began they fought the workmen, killed some and it was only after they were defeated by ^{gunmen} soldiers that the work could go on. The railroad was built however further to the south. This shows a bit of the former spirit of the place and you will see how it has changed. Every night from three to five hundred stood at the open space in front of the temple and listened attentively to the gospel story. We sensed no anti-foreign feeling at all. The medicine box proved most useful and helpful here. At the feet of the hideous figures of the newly repaired and painted idols I had my classes with the teacher. The head man of the village who formerly was bitterly antagonistic to the gospel was most cordial and friendly. He came with ^{9 food} gifts for us one morning much to our surprise. While he made no public profession he learned to pray and seemed truly touched. A teacher in a nearby village led his pupils every night to hear and they learned several songs which they sang unusually well. These people had two years ago been grossly deceived by a

man posing as a religious leader to work his money-making scheme. To ^{only} those who paid he explained his 'religion'. An money payment he guaranteed heaven and promised in an imminent catastrophe they would be left and then they could sit on choice good land and houses. Of course they giving the most money would be the higher class then. He must have been a clever one for many sold farm animals and land even to give him money. He got several hundred dollars and never returned. They ~~were~~ ^{are} surely ~~now~~ regretting their mistake. However people follow anything but the true way - at the end of the time some thirty asked to have names recorded as 'interested'.

Tang Ling to Tsingtao From 12 A.M. I rode a mule in the rain four miles to the train, caught a ^{slow} freight & passenger train to Tsingtao at 7 P.M. to meet ^{the Board representative} ~~the~~ George J. Scott and party who were visiting in Tsingtao. I arrived barely in time to go to dinner with them at the Grand Hotel, the finest in Tsingtao, in my shabby country clothes! Nerve!! Yes. But there was no other way, at least they saw me as I am most of the time.

Lo Chang Chia Wu Tze 90 miles by train, 12 miles across country in ricksha and riding a mule. stayed three weeks. glorious fall weather made the preaching trip

3] ^{especially enjoyable.} Walked to nine villages, several large market centers. The victrola is a splendid help. Someone is always glad to bring out a table and benches and often a pot of tea. After playing a little while we have a good crowd for a preaching service. We gave out a great quantity of tracts and gospels here. Besides these trips we had classes for women and at night I helped Miss Lane with the non-christian service while Miss Tan led the few christians in Bible study. There are elders ^{who} for various reasons had become so discouraged he was about to give up his faith, renewed his consecration with a new understanding and love for the Master. It was simply beautiful to see the change in him. The Master, too, graciously touched the body of his wife who was paralyzed. She walked to the gate with us the day we left much to the joy of us and to the surprise of the non-christians who had returned and mocked saying that she had brought on the calamity by believing in christianity. What sweet fellowship we had with them.

North to Ywan Chia. We, with all of our baggage piled in a big farm cart, slowly wended our unscriptural way, drawn by a big black slow cow, a black donkey, and a black mule, four miles to the home of a widow in whose village for four years they had not had a regular preaching service. Stayed two days in a new bride's room, just recently papered and furnished with all the bright new furniture of the bride.

North East to Wan Chia. Again a big cart - pulled by a red cow and grey mule - four miles to Wan Chia. A near-disaster on this road has now become ofake to us. An elder, blind in one eye, and his very bow-legged brother who walked with difficulty and whom we later learned was a bit simple, were driving our cart in the usual way - walking beside the animal directing it by shouts and cracks of a long cow hide whip. At a turn in the road away ^{for the stiff immovable shafts} the edge of a pool over carters didn't leave enough space ^{to turn}. One wheel sunk in the mud and we barely escaped being overturned into the pool. It was the last of November but the pool wasn't frozen; the water was not deep enough to float the heavy cart so we would have been caught under its weight in deep mud. It was truly dangerous not to speak of the inconvenience of wet clothes and bedding. The teacher and the cook walking beside were more frightened than we as they saw the danger more clearly. While they pulled out the cart we went on into the village to visit a christian. Soon we were on the way again.

Altar of Sacrifice on Tai Shan

grateful indeed for
the Master's protection.

From the road we saw a big
temple where thirty years ago three hundred
people were caught in a fire trap and burned to death.
The unidentified were all buried in one big grave.
We later visited it and saw in the second courtyard,

a most complete and interesting array of idols. Those that
guarded the gate were enormous human figures, hideous
in their fierceness, ^{fully} fourteen feet high.

It was nearly dark when we reached Wan Chia and
were led to a big empty house where we were to live.
Soon beds, tables and benches were carried in; we hung
a curtain partition of sheets pinned with safety pins
on to strings from the rafters, made up beds, had
supper and before long were ready to go to the street
where the cook was already playing the irritable
and a crowd had gathered. I had a happy day on
Sunday with a group of Christians who sent a mule
for me to ride over to lead their worship service.
Being able to meet with these scattered Christians
who have so little of contact with others is
surely a joy and well worth any trouble or effort.

Isingiao The weather turned very cold and we had
no winter clothes so again to the road. Up before
dawn to cover the thirty-five miles in a covered
cart, a miniature prairie schooner type, to the
rail road. Had some trouble satisfying the covetous
ferryman but were not delayed. ^{It was dark when we arrived and} hot meat
and vegetable dumplings in the crowded inn at the
railway station gave us courage for the train
ride on home. Nine o'clock reached home, to cold
dusty rooms but welcomed by Mrs. Chandler,
in whose house I live, with a hot lunch, hot
bath and a big pile of letters - which regardless

5] of the late hour I eagerly read. Waited here a few days for station conference with the Executive Secretary of the mission. Had a few days to study, send a few Christmas cards, prepare to lead a Sunday morning service at one of Twing's churches and get off again to the country for our Christmas.

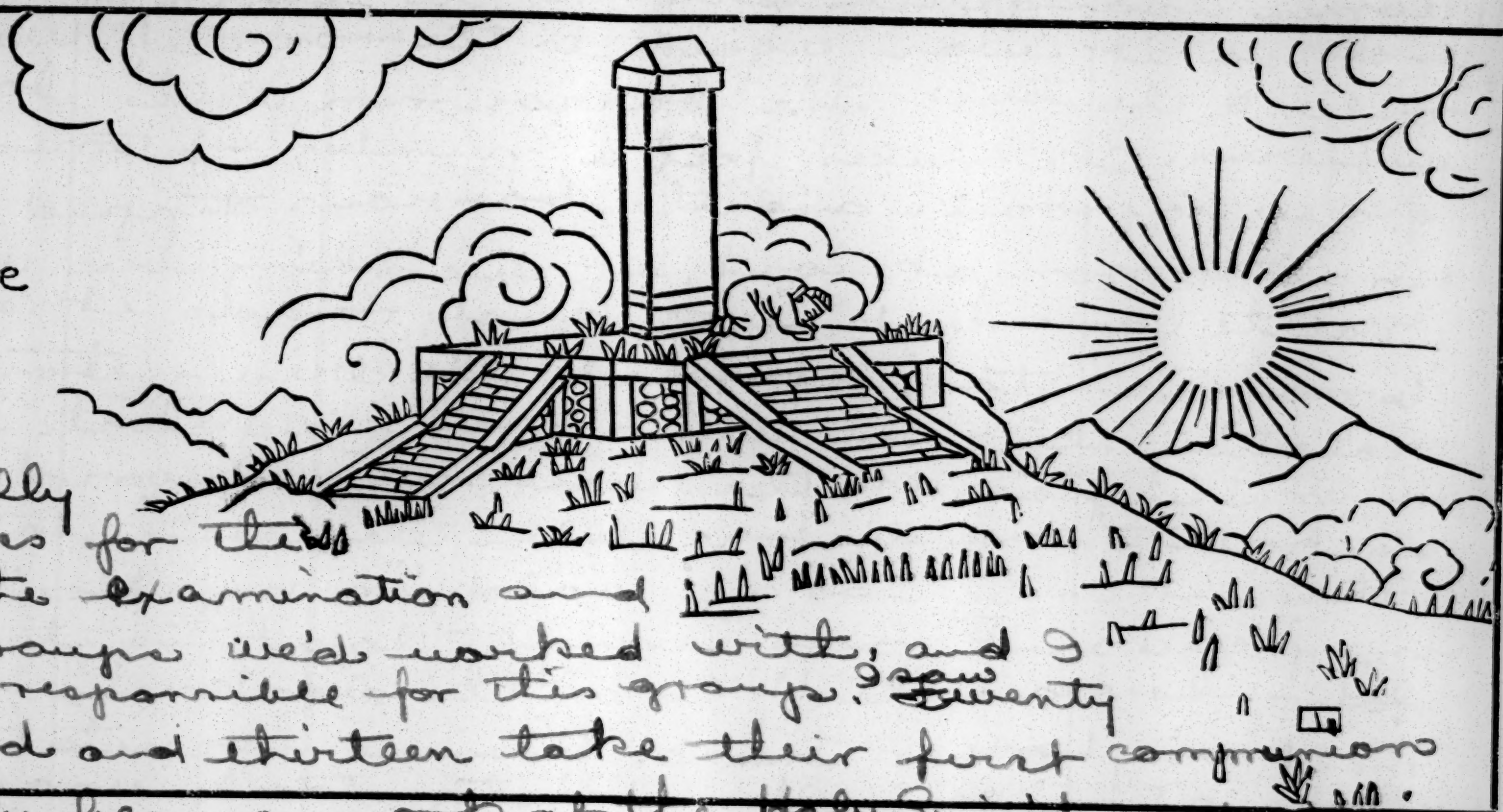
Mao Chia Ling. Sixty miles by an overcrowded motor bus which twice refused to go and I truly feared it was beyond hope. But car-wonders never cease in China also so off we rattled to get stuck twice in the deep trenches of roads made even more impossible by recent snows and rains. The wonder is that car ever ^{got} through! We arrived, the luggage, the cook and I in time for a wedding feast. The day ^{was} interrupted by a call to attend the meeting of the Local Council, made up of Chinese and foreign representatives, that controls the work of the field.

No bus - so on a one-man wheelbarrow, pulled by a tiny but peppy grey mule, we were on the road in the cold frosty morning some time before the big red sun made its appearance at the horizon. Because I cannot sit for any length of time cross-legged, riding on a wheelbarrow is my cross - and I am the cross for the pusher for every movement increases his trouble and I continually slid off! Fortunately the noon train was waiting so I got home before dark. Spent one week in town and then ^{on} one of the coldest days of the year with a high biting north wind we went back to the country - thirty miles again in the prairie schooner facing the gale. But with a warm cap, a big fur-lined overcoat over my inner fur-lined garment I did not suffer. I went thru the village of my Chinese family just at meal time so not only did I have a hot meal to cheer the cold trip but also had the pleasure of seeing all of the friends once more.

At Mao Chia Ling we spent Christmas with a new group of Christians who celebrated for the first time the Saviour's birth. I went with Miss Chow + Miss Wang in the clear early morning to the home of each to sing Christmas carols. The that songs of the angels was sung nearly two thousand years ago it was sung for the first time then in this village.

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Altar of Sacrifice on Tai Shan



I was especially happy to witness for the first time the examination and baptism of groups we'd worked with, and I feel especially responsible for this group. ^{I saw} Twenty there baptized and thirteen take their first communion.

This has truly been a work of the Holy Spirit and it is a wonderful joy to have had a wee share in it.

Chang Chia Pui, 'Walked four miles - stayed about three weeks.' We lived in the Chinese paritor's rooms - Fortunately they were very warm as here we had ten days of the coldest weather this winter. Warm felt shoes, called in south 'Old Man's Happiness', and warm clothes helped out and our classes did not stop. I was preparing for examinations so I worked on Chinese till dusk when a group of little girls, who made hairnets in the daytime, came to sing and learn Bible verses. Then came best part of the day. A Bible class of some twenty to study Matthew, a few of the groups had heard much of the gospel but ^{had} not made any decision to believe. There was also one who had heard very little before and to the surprise of all came constantly. His dry humor often convulsed us but his sincerity and interest were very striking. He was converted by the Word itself. Here too before we left Rev. Mr. Chow lead the baptismal service. One man, clever and educated, but a gambler came constantly. We could see his increasing unhappiness and uneasiness until at last he gave it up definitely and surrendered to the Master. This was almost beyond our hopes even - that he ^{became} a changed man and his whole family were baptized with the ten that night. That made three complete families of baptized believers in that village. It was a joyous ending to the week there.

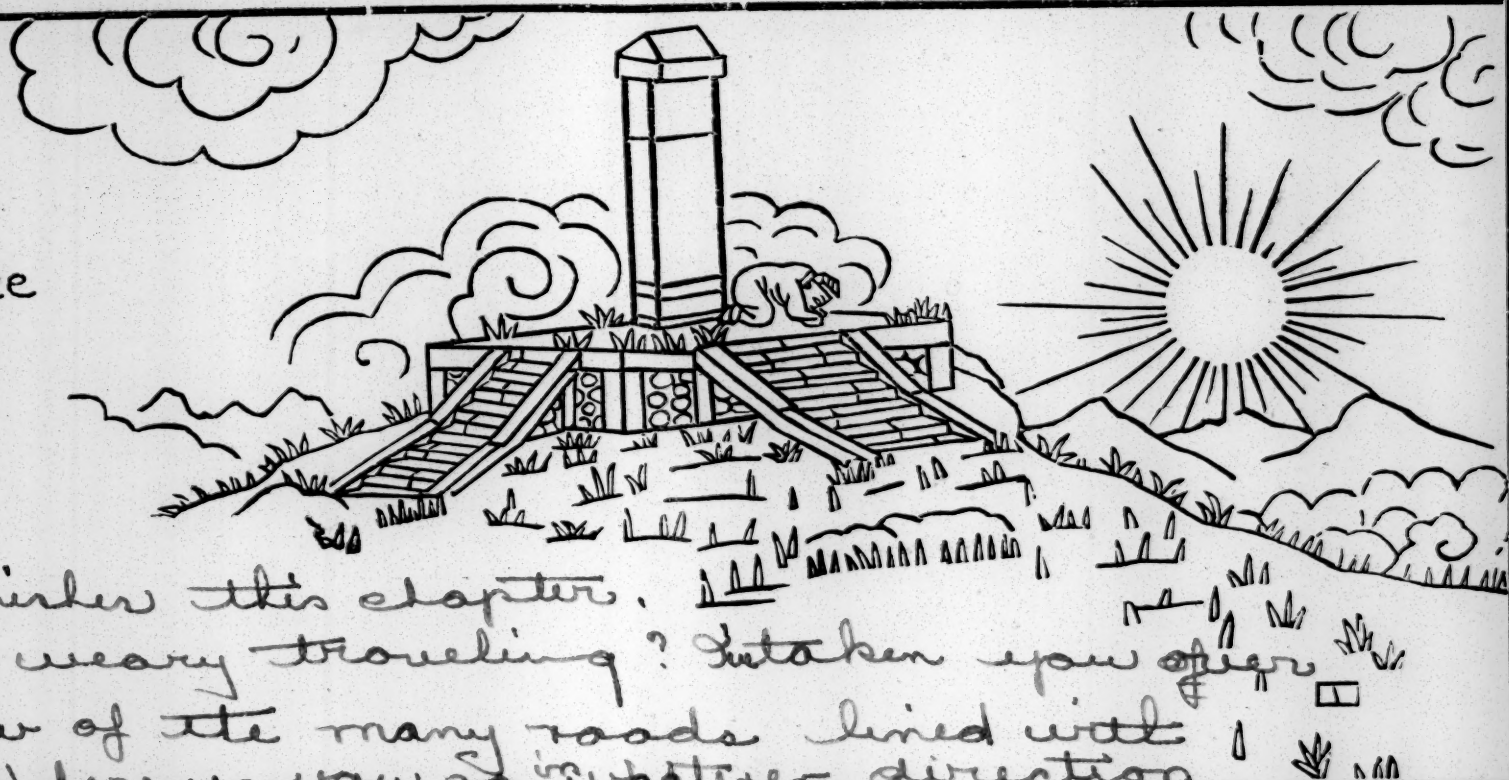
Tringtoo The last of January letters called ^{for} the four

7] women evangelists and me to return to attend a conference so it was again to the road! Walked four miles to the bus. The barrowmen with baggage surely suffered. The mules fell a number of times on the frozen icy roads and the barrows tipped over. Late in afternoon, at last, a new shiny bus without a rattle came but with such roads it seemed impossible to make Tsingtao. At first the driver thought of asking violating the rule that after six o'clock buses cannot enter Tsingtao on the presence and word of a foreigner, but after one before when we were late I saw they let us by - as all said, "on my fee" - they decided my fee wasn't good enough looking to risk it four hours late!! So in the darkness we stopped half way home in Tsimo. Chinese hospitality is beyond description. Miss Chou's sister took us all on her kang and fixed rice hot food for us - Next morning at dawn up to go to Tsingtao - arrived home at noon to open up cold rooms - work up - and read in the pile of Christmas mail from your dear ones. Two days at home to get the first half of my fifth year Chinese language exams off and prepare to go again - -

Weihsien

Weihsien for a weeks conference at which Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa the famous Japanese Christian and social worker was the chief speaker. Such a unique outstanding personality he is! This modest little man, so filled with God's love that his face is fairly aglow, so true to the word of God and so practical and sincere in practicing the gospel truths, led us to the very feet of the master as he gave five mornings to the study of the Cross of Jesus. He is the leader of a movement to establish Christian co-operative societies as a means of in a practical way trying to express the love of God to the poor in solving their problems of existence and also as a means of combating Bolshevism. The cross of Jesus is society's only hope for solution of its problems but this can only be realized as each Christian bears this cross as Christ said, 'Heath to self to live for others' are his greatly emphasized points. 'Love, the Law of Life' is his most recent book in English. Read it - if you can. ^{we should not be proud} If America falls in spiritual leadership - God will raise leaders from the orient.

Altar of Sacrifice
on
Tai Shan



8] That finishes this chapter.
are you weary traveling? But when you enter
only a few of the many roads lined with
villages. Wherever you go, in whatever direction
you look, on - on - on - there are villages.
We've touched by a few, and ^{those} only slightly, of the
thousands, yes millions, of ^{Chinese} villages still
waiting without Christ, for messengers to
travel the roads. The joy of the road is waiting for you.

'Back to the road again and again' out in the
crisp clear air

Comrades true with hearts in tune, gospel
gypsies are we with this love to share

For barter and gold to the ends of the earth
men go not counting life's loss

Then haste as the road goes on and on
For 'them' also He died on the Cross,

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